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ACTION ARA-15

INFO OCT-01 ADS-00 HA-05 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 CIAE-00  
INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 SR-05 AID-05 SP-02 EB-08  
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O 101550Z APR 79  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0200

[REDACTED] SECTION 1 OF 2 BUENOS AIRES 2828

E.O. 12065 XDS-1 4-10-09; (CASTRO, RAUL H.) OR-M  
TAGS SHUM, AR  
SUBJECT [REDACTED] AMBASSADOR DISCUSSES HUMAN RIGHTS WITH GEN VIOLA

1. [REDACTED] ENTIRE TEXT)

2. SUMMARY: GENERAL VIOLA, ARMY COMMANDER AND JUNTA PRESIDENT, STATED JACOBO TIMERMAN'S POSSIBILITIES OF BEING RELEASED HAVE WORSENERED. HE ALSO OUTLINED HIS STRATEGY OF POSTPONEMENT OF LABOR STRIKES UNTIL POSSIBLY JULY. HE FORESEES MAJOR LABOR STRIFE IN JULY. ARMY FINDS NO TRACE OF ROBERTO AND ROSE BARREIRO, HUSBAND AND WIFE, REPORTED MISSING SINCE MARCH 12. HE EXCLUDES ARMY PARTICIPATION ON BARREIROS' DISAPPEARANCE, BUT NOW CHECKING WITH POLICE. VIOLA COLY DISCOUNTS RUMORS OF COUP D' ETAT DURING NEXT MONTH OR SO. END SUMMARY.

3. ON SATURDAY NOON (APRIL 7) I RECEIVED PHONE CALL FROM GENERAL VIOLA'S AIDE INFORMING ME OF HIS BOSS' DESIRE TO MEET WITH ME ON MONDAY, APRIL 9, AT 18:30 HRS IN HIS OFFICE. I ARRIVED A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE TIME SCHEDULED AND HIS INDISCREET AIDE TOLD MET VIOLA WAS MEETING WITH WEST GERMAN AMBASSADOR, WHO WAS TRYING TO CONVINCE VIOLA OF THE ADVANTAGES IN ACQUIRING GERMAN NUCLEAR REACTORS.

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4. DISAPPEARED: ROBERTO AND ROSA BARREIRO: VIOLA'S MEETING WITH THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR MUST HAVE BEEN SATISFACTORY AS VIOLA SEEMED PLEASED. CONSIDERING THIS A PROPITIOUS MOMENT

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ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)  
U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS  
Margaret P. Griefeld, Director  
Exemption(s):  
☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny  
Declassify: ☐ In Part ☒ In Full  
( ) Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to  
Date ☐ Declassify on ☐ Reason

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TO MAKE MY GRIEVANCES KNOWN, I PULLED OUT MY SHOPPING LIST. I TOLD VIOLA FIRST THINGS COME FIRST AND THAT TOPIC IS THE STATUS OF ROBERTO AND MARIA ROSA PAREDES DE BARREIRO, HUSBAND AND WIFE, REPORTED MISSING SINCE MARCH 12. ALTHOUGH, EMBASSY DIDN'T MAKE THIS FACT KNOWN TO VIOLA UNTIL LAST THURSDAY, APRIL 5, AS INFORMATION WAS UNKNOWN TO US. VIOLA WAS QUICK IN TELLING ME IT WAS NOT AN ARMY OPERATION SINCE GENERAL GALTIERI, FIRST CORPOS COMMANDER, DISCLAIMED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF SUCH AN OPERATION. VIOLA REPEATED IF THERE WAS A DISAPPEARANCE IT WAS NOT ARMY. HE TOLD ME GENRAL GALTIERI WAS CHECKING WITH THE POLICE AND WOULD NOTIFY ME ASAP, WHENEVER ANY INFORMATION WAS AVAILABLE. I REMINDED VIOLA I WAS LEAVING FOR WASHINGTON, DC SOON AND WOULD APPRECIATE HI INFORMATION BEFORE MY DEPARTURE.

5. FATE OF JACOBO TIMERMAN: I MENTIONED TIMERMAN'S NAME AND VIOLA INTERRUPTED ME BY STATING "OH, GOSH YOU BRING THAT UP AGAIN". I TOLD HIM MRS TIMERMAN HAD CALLED HER HUSBAND FROM ISRAEL LAST WEEK STATING HER INFORMATION WAS THAT TIMERMAN WAS GOING TO ISRAEL, BUT AS CONDITION PRECEDENT TIMERMAN WAS BEING DEPRIVED OF HIS CITIZENSHIP. HOPING TO GET A POSITIVE ANSWER I ASKED A LEADING QUESTION. "HE IS LEAVING ISN'T HE?" VIOLA LOWERED HIS VOICE, GAVE ME A HOUND DOG LOOK AND TOLD ME TIMERMAN'S CHANCES OF BEING LIBERATED HAD WORSENERED. HE EMPHASIZED HIS AND MININT HARGUINDEGUY'S EFFORTS HAD BEEN IN VAIN. HE MADE IT CLEAR TO ME THEY WERE OUT-VOTED ON TIMERMAN'S RELEASE. HE FAILED TO CLARIFY WHO HAD OUT-VOTED THEM. HE TOLD ME THE TIMERMAN AFFAIR WAS A LONG STORY AND WANTED TO TELL ME ABOUT IT WHEN HE HAD MORE TIME. VIOLA LOOKED AT ME AS IF LOOKING FOR SYMPATHY AND SAID "YOU KNOW  
[REDACTED]  
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I SUPPORT TIMERMAN'S RELEASE". I SUGGESTED HE WAS NOT IN FULL CONTROL AND EVERYONE SHOULD RESPOND TO HIS WISHES. HE REPLIED "TO SOME EXTENT YOU ARE CORRECT, BUT NOT FULLY".

6. LABOR UNREST: I TOLD VIOLA PREVAILING WINDS WERE BRINGING FORTH INDICATIONS OF A MAJOR LABOR STRIKE. HE TOLD ME TO DISCOUNT THOSE STORIES FOR THE MONTHS OF APRIL, MAY AND JUNE. HE DID, HOWEVER, STATE HE FULLY ANTICIPATED JULY TO BE AN AGONIZING MONTH. IN REPLY TO ME INQUIRY, VIOLA STATED LAW OF PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS (LABOR UNIONS) AND LAW OF SOCIAL SERVICES WOULD EXPLODE IN JULY. VIOLA'S EVALUATION WAS THIS WOULD PRECIPITATE A MAJOR CONFRONTATION WITH LABOR. HE SAID THIS COULD BE QUITE SERIOUS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION. HE

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EXPLAINED TO ME SMALLER STRIKES HAD BEEN SETTLED ONE BY ONE, BUT HIS STRATEGY WAS TO POSTPONE EVERYTHING, IF POSSIBLE, TO JULY.

7. PRESIDENT VIDELA'S RESIGNATION: I EXPLAINED TO VIOLA GENERAL GOSSIP HAD IT THAT STRIKES WERE BEING USED AS AN EXCUSE FOR A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT. VIOLA SAID HE WAS INTERESTED IN HEARING THE LATEST RUMORS. I TOLD HIM IF HE WAS SERIOUS IN KNOWING ABOUT RUMORS, I WOULD CONVEY THEM TO HIM. HE STATED, "DON'T LEAVE ME IN SUSPENSE. WHAT ARE THEY?" I TOLD HIM FIRST RUMOR HAD VIDELA STEPPING DOWN AND HE (VIOLA) STEPPING UP AS PRESIDENT. GENERAL GALTIERI, A VIDELA CONFIDANT, WOULD THEN TAKE OVER AS ARMY COMMANDER AND MEMBER OF THE JUNTA. IF THIS OCCURRED, GENERAL SUAREZ MASON AND GENERAL MENENDEZ, WOULD BE FORCED TO RESIGN AS THEY ARE SENIOR TO GALTIERI. I TOLD HIM THE SECOND RUMOR WAS HAT VIDELA WOULD RESIGN AS PRESIDENT. HE (VIOLA) WOULD PROMOTE HIMSELF TO THE PRESIDENCY AND GENERAL SUREZ MASON WOULD TAKE OVER AS ARMY COMMANDER. HE DIDN'T BLINK AN EYE AND OUT-DID THE MOST STOIC NAVAJO INDIAN BY NOT SHOWING ANY EMOTION. HE NEITHER ADMITTED NOR DENIED IT, BUT INSTEAD MADE HAND GESTURE AS IF SAYING IT WAS NONSENSE.

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8. RIGHT OF OPTION: I EXPRESSED MY DISAPPOINTMENT IN THE SLOW-MOVING RIGHT OF OPTION PROGRAM. I TOLD VIOLA US EMBASSY WAS READY TO MOVE IMMEDIATELY ON RIGHT OF OPTION CASES, BUT IT APPEARED GOA WAS NOT HONORING OUR APPLICATIONS. I AGAIN EXPLAINED THIS WAS AN EASY WAY TO CLEAR THEIR PRISONS BEFORE ARRIVAL OF IAIRC. HE TOOK NOTES ON THE SUBJECT AND AGAIN PROMISED TO TALK TO GENERAL HARGUINDEGUY. HE ASSURED ME

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FROM NOW ON RIGHT OF OPTION CASES WOULD BE MOVING FAST IN  
VIEW OF THE FORTHCOMING IAHC VISIT.

9. CLANDESTINE PRISONS AND THE DISAPPEARED: I AGAIN RAISED  
THE ISSUES OF CLANDESTINE CAMPS AND POSSIBLE ACCOUNTING  
FOR THE DISAPPEARED. MY PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT ME  
THAT VIOLA DISLIKES TALKING ABOUT THE FATE OF THE DISAPPEARED.  
HE APPEARED SLIGHTLY ANNOYED AT MY RAISING THE SUBJECT AGAIN,  
AS HE KNOWS I RAISE IT ALMOST EVERYTIME I MEET WITH HIM. HE  
WAS MOST EMPHATIC IN TELLING ME THERE WERE NO CLANDESTINE  
CAMPS. HE RAISED HIS VOICE WHEN HE TOLD ME THAT GOA LACKED  
INFORMATION ON THE FATE OF THE DISAPPEARED. THEREFORE, IT  
WASN'T THAT GOA WAS BEING RECALCITRANT IN GIVING DATA ON  
DISAPPEARED, BUT THEY JUST DIDN'T HAVE ANY FACTS ON WHICH  
TO ARRIVE AT ANY CONCLUSIONS. HE TOLD ME HE RECOGNIZED THIS  
WOULD CREATE AN IMPASSE WITH IAHC. I REMINDED HIM THIS HAD  
ALSO CREATED AN IMPASSE WITH THE USG AS GENERAL FEELING PRE-  
VAILED SOME TYPE OF ACCOUNTABILITY OF DISAPPEARED SHOULD  
EXIST. VIOLA TOLD ME THEY HAD NO SOLUTION TO THE DISAPPEARED.  
WHEN IS ASKED HIM ABOUT PRISONERS BEING HELD AT THE DISPOSITION  
OF THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES, HE SAID THIS IS A CATEGORY WHICH  
NO LONGER EXISTS; THE MILITARY ARE NOT NOW USING IT AS A  
METHOD OF HOLDING ON TO PRISONERS.

COMMENT: VIOLA SHOWED CONFIDENCE THAT THE GOA CAN WEATHER THE  
IAHC VISIT. HE GIVES THE IMPRESSION THAT THE COMMISSION WILL

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FIND OVERALL PRISON CONDITIONS AT THE TIME OF THEIR VISIT  
SATISFACTORY, AND THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS DOWN. HE IS  
RECONCILED TO AN IMPASSE WITH THE COMMISSION ON THE DIS-  
APPEARED, AND PROFESSES THAT THE GOA WILL BE ABLE TO  
IMPROVE THEIR IMAGE BASED ON HUMAN RIGHTS CONDITIONS AS  
THEY WILL EXIST AT THE TIME OF THE VISIT AND FROM THEN ON.  
THE COMMISSION'S VISIT ASSUMES GREATER INCREASING IMPORTANCE  
WHEN ONE CONSIDERS GOA'S EFFORTS TO PREPARE FOR ITS ARRIVAL.  
THOUGH THERE ARE DOUBTLESS OTHER FACTORS AT WORK, THE IMPACT  
OF THE VISIT HAS BEEN THE MOST EFFECTIVE FORCE FOR HUMAN  
RIGHTS IMPROVEMENTS SINCE MY ARRIVAL. END COMMENT.

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10. POSTPONEMENT OF IAHC VISIT: I ASKED VIOLA IF THERE WERE PLANS UNDERWAY BY GOA TO ASK FOR A POSTPONEMENT OF IAHC VISIT. HE REPLIED "DEFINTELY NOT". VIOLA STATED IF IAHC POSTPONED ITS VISIT IT WOULD NOT BE AT THE REQUEST OF GOA. HE STATED THEY ARE PREPARED FOR THE COMMISSION VISIT.

CASTRO

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